



# **DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PARKS AND RECREATION MANAGEMENT INTERNSHIP PROGRAM**



## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### ***When are positions available?***

Positions are available year-round (fall, spring, and summer academic semesters). Start dates generally coincide with the beginning of each academic semester.

### ***How long does an intern work for the Department?***

Interns are asked to commit to at least 12 weeks of work during one academic semester. Students who successfully complete a semester-long internship with the Department may have the option to continue participation in the program, either in the same placement or by rotating to another appropriate division within the Department.

### ***How many hours must an intern work each week?***

Positions are available on both a part-time and full-time basis. In general, the Department prefers that interns work a minimum of 20 hours per week. However, specific work schedules are arranged on an individual basis between each intern and his or her supervisor. The Department understands that students are often in need of flexible work schedules, and will make every effort to accommodate those needs within reason.

### ***How do I apply?***

Applications must be postmarked by the following dates:

- For fall semester internships—May 1 prior to the start of the fall semester
- For spring semester internships—November 1 prior to the start of the spring semester
- For summer semester internships—February 1 prior to the start of the summer semester

Extensions to the application deadline may be requested through the Internship Program Manager. The Program Manager will grant such extensions at his or her discretion.

To apply, students must submit the following:

- Parks and Recreation Management Internship Application Cover Sheet
- District of Columbia Government Employment Application Form
- Cover letter addressed to the Director of DC Parks and Recreation
- Current resume
- Writing sample
- Unofficial college/university transcript

Applications are available several ways:

- In person at the address below
- On the Web at [www.dpr.dc.gov](http://www.dpr.dc.gov).
- By mail or e-mail, contact:  
Internship Program Manager  
Office of the Director  
DC Parks and Recreation  
3149 16th St., NW  
Washington, DC 20010  
202-673-7664  
[dprinterns@dc.gov](mailto:dprinterns@dc.gov)

### ***Who is eligible?***

Internships are open to college and graduate students, as well as those who have recently completed their undergraduate or graduate programs and are seeking temporary practical training. The program seeks students from a variety of disciplines including, but not limited to, recreation/leisure studies, therapeutic recreation, public administration, communications, marketing, graphic design, horticulture, environmental planning, architecture, computer information systems, education, and dance/music/art therapy. All should have an interest in the District of Columbia, urban parks and recreation, and public service in general.

### ***What is the process for selecting interns?***

A central internship program manager reviews the incoming application to ensure it is complete, identifies the applicant's areas of interest, and then forwards the application to relevant divisions with open internship positions. The application is then reviewed by those divisions and each determines whether or not to proceed further. If a division decides to proceed, an in-person or telephone interview will be arranged and conducted by the prospective supervisor and any other staff members the supervisor chooses to include.

Applicants are evaluated on their academic records, strength of their application materials, potential for professional growth, demonstrated commitment to a public service career (particularly in the parks and recreation field), and on how well their skills, education, and experience match with the needs of the Department.

An applicant may be interviewed by more than one division, if more than one division was noted to be of interest to the applicant on his or her application. In such cases, all divisions interested in hiring the applicant weigh the applicant's interests with the best interests of the Department in order to determine which division will extend the offer of employment.

The Department will make every effort to notify applicants of their status within one month of the application deadline. Furthermore, the Department strives to ensure that all selected applicants receive an offer of employment no later than one month prior to their expected start date. Applicants should note, however, that all selections for paid positions must be approved by the DC Office of Personnel. In turn, the Department works closely with the Office of Personnel to prevent delays in executing offers of employment.

***If I apply, but am not selected, can I be considered for another semester?***

Applicants who are not offered a position for the semester or with the division of their choice, should not assume that future placement with the Department or with a particular division is out of reach. It may be that no positions in their area of interest were available at the time of application, or the Department chose a candidate with a particular skill set required to meet an immediate agency need.

In such cases, applicants may contact the Department to request consideration for the next semester. Such applicants will not be required to submit another application. However, applicants may, if they so choose, forward an updated resume to the Department.

Applicants who are not offered a position for the semester of their choice, but who would like to be considered for a position beyond the next semester, should contact the Department to determine whether or not a new application will be required. In all such cases, however, an updated resume will be required.

***What types of work do interns perform?***

Each placement is unique and host divisions involve interns in a range of projects and processes. Interns interested in general administration may assist with strategic planning, budget development and analysis, and policy research. Interns interested in recreation/leisure programming may assist with program design, implementation, and evaluation. In all cases, job duties are dependent on the interests and skills of the intern and the Department's needs. See the Department website at [www.dpr.dc.gov](http://www.dpr.dc.gov) for summary position descriptions.

***Do interns get to select their placement(s)?***

The written application provides applicants with the opportunity to rank the placing divisions of interest to them. This information, in combination with the applicant's education, experience, and skills, then determines which divisions are selected to review the application and consider the applicant for possible employment. Once hired, the placing division makes every effort to structure job assignments around each intern's particular professional interests. Care is taken to ensure that interns are exposed to as many facets of parks and recreation management as time allows, and to include structured job rotations in placements, whenever possible. See the Department website at [www.dpr.dc.gov](http://www.dpr.dc.gov) for a list of prospective placement opportunities.

***What divisions host interns?***

The location of paid internship positions during a particular semester depends on the needs of the Department, funding availability, and the education, skills, and interests of applicants. See the Department website at [www.dpr.dc.gov](http://www.dpr.dc.gov) for a list of prospective placement opportunities.

***Do interns receive special training?***

Yes. Interns participate in regular required professional development activities designed to expose them to areas of the Department and DC Government, in general, that they might not naturally be exposed to through their placements. In addition to meeting with various leaders in the Department to learn about different aspects of programming and operations, interns may attend community meetings, city council hearings, and special seminars; tour Department facilities; and engage in park stewardship activities; among other things. Interns will have the opportunity to learn about budgeting, procurement, human resources, community outreach, and many other issues relevant to parks and recreation management.

***How are interns evaluated?***

During the first week of work, interns collaborate with their supervisors to develop an individual performance plan (IPP) that establishes written goals and performance measures. The IPP is intended to clarify intern responsibilities and assignments, as well as the expectations of the supervisor. It is also used to ensure that the intern's work aligns with applicable school requirements, if any.

At the end of each semester, interns are encouraged to submit a written self-assessment to their supervisors and the internship program manager. In addition, interns receive a written evaluation from their supervisors based on the IPP, and have the opportunity to discuss the results one-on-one with their supervisor. The Department uses the evaluation as a tool to further the learning and growth of each intern. Copies of the evaluation are provided to the intern, the internship program manager, and the intern's school if required for receipt of academic credit. For students receiving academic credit, the format of the IPP and evaluation is tailored to meet the requirements of the school, if applicable.

***Are interns guaranteed a job following graduation?***

No. Assuming that the intern completes his or her internship commitment, receives favorable performance evaluations, and wants to work for the Department upon graduation, the Department internship program manager and human resources staff will make every effort to refer the intern to appropriate positions. However, there is no guarantee that appropriate positions will be available. Furthermore, it is the intern's responsibility to complete application requirements and compete for the position alongside other applicants.

***How much are interns paid?***

Most internship positions are paid, with wages generally determined based on each intern's level of education. Hourly wages range from approximately \$7.00 for freshmen to \$10.50 for graduate students. Some interns may qualify for higher wages based on their education, work experience, and special skills.

***Does the Department pay for the interns' housing expenses?***

No. Interns are responsible for their own housing expenses.

***Is the start date negotiable?***

Start dates generally coincide with the first or second week of each academic semester. However, exceptions are occasionally made on a case-by-case basis.

***What benefits are interns eligible to receive?***

Interns are allowed free use of recreation facilities and a fee waiver for one recreation/leisure course per semester. Interns are *not* eligible for other employee benefits such as health insurance and paid leave.

***Can interns receive academic credit?***

Each intern, at his or her own choosing, may pursue academic credit for his or her work. In such cases, the intern is responsible for communicating employer requirements to his or her supervisor. In turn, all supervisors work diligently to ensure that such requirements are fulfilled.

***How many interns are selected each semester?***

The number of paid internship positions varies from semester to semester depending on the Department's needs, the availability of funding, and the education, skills, and interests of applicants. Thus, there is no set number to share.

***Do all interns attend schools in the Washington area, or are they from across the country?***

While much of our recruitment efforts focus on local colleges and universities, we welcome—and encourage—applicants from across the country. It is important to note, however, that a demonstrated connection and commitment to the District—and urban centers in general—enhances an application.